

# AMERICAN DREAM

Robert Leslie checks out whether the state of Utah lives up to its 'Greatest Snow' slogan



## WITH TYPICAL US OF A MODESTY,

Utah has transformed the slogan 'Greatest Snow On Earth' into a reality. According to the state, it delivers the goods — an average annual snowfall of between 300 and 500 inches means the state's 43 resorts are among the snowiest in the nation.

During the 2007/8 winter, the snow seasons of Alta and Snowbird averaged 200 inches of snow. Skied away up 1,000 feet, you'll find the snow and just half an hour from downtown Salt Lake City, often get big, deep snow on any given day. It's from the west — and it's on its way to the east.

**This is where I caught my first glimpse of the fabled Utah snow. The day I arrived Alta boasted 10 inches of fresh, I promptly gorged myself.**

Being home on the Pacific coast, I found the snow great. Afterward, the 3,370-foot Mount Baldy, where powder falls from the sky, and the 11,000-foot Mount Baldy, where the snow is so deep, it's a challenge to get in. The snow is so deep, it's a challenge to get in. The snow is so deep, it's a challenge to get in.

So, you mean I can't ski anymore? I said, no, I can't ski anymore. I said, no, I can't ski anymore. I said, no, I can't ski anymore. I said, no, I can't ski anymore.

After the snow hit, all morning and all day, the snow was falling. It was a great day. The snow was falling. It was a great day. The snow was falling. It was a great day.

As we moved on to the top of the double black diamond, I saw a lot of people. They were all skiing. They were all skiing. They were all skiing.

However, he couldn't have been too concerned about my welfare because he'd been skiing for a long time. He'd been skiing for a long time. He'd been skiing for a long time.

It all seems like a lifetime ago. I was there. I was there. I was there. I was there. I was there. I was there.

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Above: heading up, the road to Snowbird

The day I was there, a celeb slalom was taking place. There was the guy from *Beverly Hills 90210*, the one from *Seinfeld*, the chap from the *Sopranos* and the one that's married to Gwen Stefani.

The Olympic park with its fully-functional ski jump hill and bobsled track is impressive and for \$200 you can even hop in a sled and experience the 5Gs of force and 80 miles-an-hour speeds for yourself.

Park City nightlife can also prove a distraction. The main street is a pinball alley of bars and restaurants and, contrary to popular belief, skiers can actually drink alcohol in Utah without being clapped in irons. The drinking rules are complex, though, and unless you're eating food or are a 'member' of a bar [which costs \$5 for you or someone who'll 'sponsor' you], beer is limited to 3.2 per cent in strength, and wines and spirits are out of the question. As I took off from Salt Lake City airport, the ground almost instantly disappeared in a whirl of crystalline white. Utah was getting another delivery and I made a mental note to return, soon, but with much, much bigger skis. ☺

# SNOTES

## UTAH, USA

skiutah.com



**Getting there:** fly to Salt Lake City direct with Delta [delta.com], United Airlines [united.com] or KLM [klm.com]



**Tour operators:** High-end: Ski Dream [skidream.com]  
Mid-range: Crystal [crystalski.co.uk]  
Budget: Virgin Holidays [virginholidays.co.uk]

**Season dates:** November – April



**ALTA**  
Vertical drop: 3,216–2,600m  
Terrain: 2,200 acres  
Pistes:



**Snowmaking:** 50 acres  
**Number of runs:** 116  
**Lift passes:** \$66 a day  
**No boarding**

### DEER VALLEY

Vertical drop: 2,917–2,003m  
Terrain: 2,026 acres  
Pistes:



**Snowmaking:** 560 acres  
**Number of runs:** 100  
**Lift passes:** \$86 a day  
**No boarding**

### PARK CITY

Vertical drop: 3,490–2,104m  
Terrain: 3,300 acres  
Pistes:



**Snowmaking:** 475 acres  
**Number of runs:** 90  
**Lift passes:** \$45 a day  
**Snowpark:** 4 terrain and a superpipe

### SNOWBIRD

Vertical drop: 3,350–2,470m  
Terrain: 2,500 acres  
Pistes:



**Snowmaking:** 560 acres  
**Number of runs:** 89  
**Lift passes:** \$72  
**Snowpark:** 1 terrain

### THE CANYONS

Vertical drop: 3,045–2,073m  
Terrain: 3,700 acres  
Pistes:



**Snowmaking:** 300 acres  
**Number of runs:** 80  
**Lift passes:** \$45 a day  
**Snowpark:** 2 terrain and a 6 natural halfpipes